



E-NEWSLETTER

<http://www.house.gov/simpson>

4/16/03



A local Iraqi girl shows her enthusiasm for the US being in Iraq with a homemade sign. Her family waits to find if one of their relatives is among the thousands of Enemy Prisoners of War (EPW) in a nearby EPW camp. (US Navy photo by PH1(SW) Aaron Ansarov)

Simpson Testifies Before Committee on POW Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson testified before the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Benefits regarding his legislation to provide a monthly pension for former prisoners of war.

In February, Simpson introduced H.R. 850, the Former Prisoners of War Special Compensation Act of 2003. The bill establishes a three-tiered special monthly pension, based on length of captivity. Simpson introduced similar legislation in the 107th Congress.

Simpson's bill would create a new compensation system delivered through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Under the new system, POWs detained 30 to 120 days would receive \$150 per month, those detained 121 to 540 days would receive \$300 per month, and those detained for 540 or more days would receive \$450 per month.

Payment would be made without regard to any other compensation under the laws of the United States. In addition, the bill contains a provision to provide outpatient dental care for all POWs. Current law requires a period of internment of not less than 90 days in order to qualify. The bill has 30 bi-partisan co-sponsors.

Message from Mike

In the last week, Americans and the world witnessed history in the making. Who can ever forget the images of cheering Iraqi citizens waving and kissing American soldiers as they entered Baghdad or the toppling of a giant concrete statue of Saddam Hussein. At home, Congress was working to continue the war effort. After heavy negotiations with the Senate, the House passed a conference report to fund Operation Iraqi Freedom and send it to President Bush. The \$79 billion bill will fund national defense including \$62 billion for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Additional money will be used for homeland defense and homeland security. The House and Senate are now recessed until April 29 for the Easter District Work Period. I'll be meeting with constituents in Jerome, Twin Falls, Idaho Falls and Boise. May God continue to Bless America!

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Weekly Website

<http://www.irs.gov>

has everything you've never wanted to know about our federal tax system including forms to extend if you missed the April 15th deadline.

Federal Facts

The average tax rate for the 437,036 individual returns filed for 1916 was
2.75 percent.

Source: [http://www. freedom.gov](http://www.freedom.gov)

Quotes of the Week

If you drive a car, I'll tax the street.
If you try to sit, I'll tax your seat.
If you get too cold, I'll tax the heat.
If you take a walk, I'll tax your feet.
Taxman!

Well, I'm the taxman.
-- The Beatles ("Taxman")

Our tax code is so long it makes *War and Peace* seem breezy.
-- Steven LaTourette

It is a paradoxical truth, that tax rates are too high today, and tax revenues are too low, and the soundest way to raise the revenues in the long run is to cut the tax rates. -- John F. Kennedy

Most voters would rather have their purse or wallet stolen than be audited by the IRS. -- Frank Luntz

Congressmen Support House Passed Energy Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Heralding its potential for creating jobs, Congressmen Mike Simpson and C.L. "Butch" Otter joined a 247-175 majority on Friday as the House approved America's first comprehensive national energy policy in more than a decade.

The Energy Policy Act of 2003, H.R. 6, now awaits Senate action on its own energy legislation before a House-Senate conference committee is assigned to work out differences for final consideration.

"America does not have a comprehensive energy plan. The dramatic increases in gasoline prices at the pump are proof that we are constantly dependent upon foreign countries for our energy supplies. We must decrease this foreign dependence and seek to increase our production of America's own energy reserves," said Simpson, a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development. "At the same time we need to increase the use of alternative forms of energy and continue the development and use of nuclear power. H.R. 6 provides a mix of traditional and alternative energy programs that will ensure America can meet its energy needs into the future."

The Energy Policy Act's key provisions:

- Strengthen national security by reducing dependence on foreign energy sources through increased domestic exploration and production;
- Increase funding for programs to help low-income residents cover high energy costs;
- Promote a clean environment using renewable energy and alternative fueled vehicles;
- Modernize electricity infrastructure and protect consumers from unfair prices;
- Set stricter standards for energy use in federal buildings;
- Provide private-sector incentives for improving efficiency standards on electric products, and, improve regulation of nuclear and hydroelectric power.

Iraqi Freedom Update

This section gives you the latest war developments from the Department of Defense and perhaps items you won't get from the mainstream media.

QUICK FACTS

Total Coalition
Troops: 300,000

Total Enemy POWs:
Approximately 7,000

Total Sorties: 32,000

Total Leaflets
Dropped: 17 million

Munitions Dropped:
15,000 Guided
7,100 Unguided



"Smiling citizens crowded every street around the American positions. There was a constant stream of people willing to give information and loudly condemn Saddam. American soldiers who a day before had been in close combat were now basking in the cheers and applause, their arms tired from returning friendly waves." Time Magazine, 4-14-03

Coalition Forces Work on Humanitarian Needs



The World Food Program has purchased 500,000 tons of food for delivery into Iraq. In addition to the estimated 675,000 tons of food identified by the UN under the Oil-for-Food program, these commodities can feed the entire population of Iraq for several months.

This week the first of two ships carrying 50,000 tons of Australian wheat will finish offloading in Kuwait. The food, which will be used as part of the OFF program, can feed 1.7 million Iraqis in need.

The World Health Organization is flying 50 surgical kits to Jordan. Each kit contains anesthetics, surgical equipment, and medical disposables, such as bandages and syringes, for 100 surgeries and several days of post-operative recovery.

CAPTIONS: ABOVE: Jubilant Iraqis cheer U.S. Army soldiers at a humanitarian aid compound in the city of An Najaf. (U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Arlo K. Abrahamson) LEFT: An Iraqi boy holds a humanitarian food ration given to him by U.S. Army soldiers. (U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Arlo K. Abrahamson).

See more photos at whitehouse.gov

Operation Home Front: What You Can Do

Have Family Serving in the Armed Services? Display a Blue Banner

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congress passed a resolution calling on all Americans to honor the men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families. H.Con.Res. 109 encourages these families to proudly display the Blue Star Banner or, if their loved one has made the ultimate sacrifice, the Gold Star.

“For 85 years the Blue Banner has been a symbol of sacrifice and support in times of war,” Simpson said. “I encourage all families in Idaho to proudly display the Blue Banner in their windows so as a community we can rally around our troops and their families. During these troubled times, it’s vital that both our servicemen and women and their families at home know their sacrifice and service does not go unnoticed.”

The Blue Star Banner was patented and designed in 1917, during the height of the First World War, by Army Captain Robert L. Queissner of the 5th Ohio Infantry, who had two sons serving on the front lines. The banner quickly became the symbol for a family member serving the Nation and families began proudly displaying these banners in their front windows during the First World War. Each Blue Star on the banner represents a family member serving in the Armed Services and symbolizes hope and pride.

Beginning in 1918, the Blue Star would signify the living, and a smaller Gold Star would be placed on top of the Blue Star, forming a blue border, if the family member was killed or died while on active duty, to symbolize his or her sacrifice for the cause of freedom. The banners were displayed widely during the Second World War. Many of the banners displayed during the First and Second World Wars were hand-made by the mothers of those serving in the Armed Forces. The legacy of the banner continued during the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars and other periods of conflict, as well as in times of peace.

Where Can I get a Blue Banner?



Banners can be downloaded for free from the American Legion's website at www.legion.org or through the Blue Star Mother's website at www.bluestarmothers.org

They can also be purchased through the American Legion's website www.legion.org as well as at www.serviceflags.com

Support Scholarships

Congressman Mike Simpson urges Idahoans to support the Armed Forces Foundation program to help provide for the future educational needs of children whose military parents are killed in action.

Go to www.armedforcesfoundation.org calling the Armed Forces Foundation at (202) 544-0433, or by mailing donations to:

Armed Forces Foundation
314 Independence Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003